

What Does a Marriage Need to Be Strong?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10: (NASB) ⁹*Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. ¹⁰For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion.*



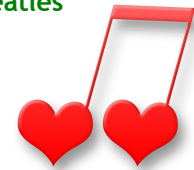
"Til death do us part!" It seems not all that long ago those words (which were in some way included in every marriage ceremony) really meant something. They symbolized the depth of a promise made between a man and a woman to stand beside one another through any and all circumstances. Now, we really could not tell you if some semblance of those words are still part of a typical marriage ceremony, but we can tell you that unfortunately more than half of all marriages fail. Why? What are the missing, overlooked or unknown ingredients that make a marriage strong and successful? What should we be saying, doing or thinking to be continually building a relationship that can not only last for a lifetime, but flourish for that lifetime?

Let's begin with these profound words:



All You Need is Love," (Short Clip) The Beatles

All you need is love
All you need is love
All you need is love, love
Love is all you need



There are several basic types of love the Bible references, four of which will be a basis for our conversation today. Our objective is to define what it takes to build and maintain a strong marriage.

This is the model God gave, and Jesus verified:

Matthew 19:4-6: (NASB) ⁴*And he answered and said, Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? ⁶So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.*

Love is not mentioned in this Scripture. This marriage model obviously has much more than "love" as its foundation.

For a successful marriage, we start with the kind of love that often takes center stage today: "Eros."

EROS
Sensual love



(Source: Four Types of Love in the Bible, Thoughtco.com) Eros (Pronounced: AIR-ohs) is the Greek word for sensual or romantic love. The term originated from the mythological Greek god of love, sexual desire, physical attraction, physical love, Eros, whose Roman counterpart was Cupid.

While the word “Eros” does not appear in the Bible, the effects of the word abound, for good and for evil:

Song of Solomon 1:2: (NASB) *May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine.*

Sensuality is a beautiful and sacred part of marriage.

Proverbs 5:18-21: (NASB) ¹⁸.... rejoice in the wife of your youth. ¹⁹As a loving hind and a graceful doe... Be exhilarated always with her love. ²⁰For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress?... ²¹For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He watches all his paths.

Passion should be part of marriage, not the centerpiece of a great marriage.

The issue of our human desires leading us, instead of us leading them, is basically universal:

1 Corinthians 7:8-9: (NASB) ⁸But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. ⁹But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

We need to be careful not to marry just for the purpose of burning with passion. There is much more to marriage than passion.

The world is pressed into the world of fantasy. Reality can never keep up with fantasy. We need to be careful.

“Eros,” like so many things, can enhance and destroy with equal ease:

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4: (NASB) ³For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification (purity) and honor.

We should know *how to possess ourselves in sanctification*. As a Christian, being holy should be important to us. For more on the topic of being holy, please search our archives for Episode 1059 “You’re a Christian, But Are You Holy?” We need to flee from immorality in action and in thought.



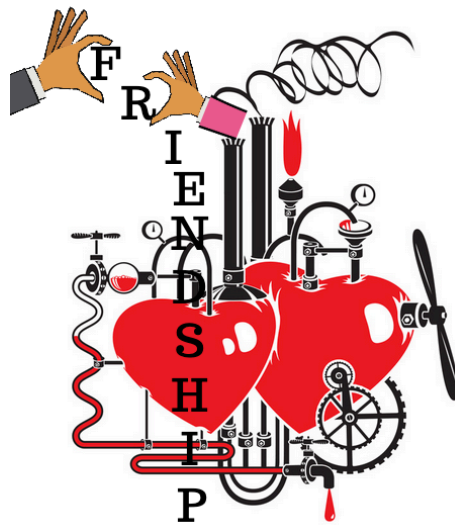
**Passion is powerful and healthy.
What drove it at one time in life
may change over time.
Be sure your “Eros”
is able to change
with age and experience.**




Individuals have different inherent levels of passion which change over time. We must be willing to change with it. Allow your passion to mature with you in your marriage relationship. The power of passion can bind two spouses together. Passion does not die when we get older, it simply changes.

**The passion of marriage DOES get the most attention,
but what part of marriage does the most good?**

There are several other pieces of marriage that **MUST** be present for the passion part to have any chance of enduring. To put this all together, we need to backtrack to a kind of love that exists on a broad basis among all kinds of non-marriage relationships. Without this next form of love, we would be lost.



A strong marriage
is built upon friendship –
an enduring bond that
is forged in common
ground and exudes trust.

 **Roses to consciousness, *The Secret to Having a Healthy Strong Marriage, Your Tango***

- The first thing that I talk about in the workshop is the stages in a relationship, because I want to walk couples through the stages to normalize the process. Because in the beginning everything is all fairy dust and rose petals - it's all good, right? That's a necessary part of the process because that's where the initial bonding comes in, you know, you need that for the long haul. But then, it's a natural progression to progress into the power struggle stage. That's when you start noticing things that you don't like about the other person, and the anger starts to come up. Couples often are blindsided by this stage. They're like, "Oh my gosh, we are fighting - I guess we are not right for each other - maybe we should get divorced," or "Are we going to have to white knuckle it for 30 or 40 years?" But I think that this is the beginning of an authentic relationship because now the rose-colored glasses are coming off, and you get to have a real relationship. What I encourage couples to do is to evolve into the next phase which is the conscious love stage. That's where you are consciously and intentionally creating the kind of marriage you desire together.*

Sometimes when a relationship breaks up, the classic line is, "Let's *just* be friends." Let's look at what being good friends can do for a marriage!



Our second "love" word:

LOVE *Brotherly love*

Love: Strongs #5360 *philadelphia* brotherly love - fraternal affection, fondness

This is the most common expression of love among mankind. Families have it, teams have it, those who serve in the military have it and even gangs have it. It is common to all because it is a form of give and take, protect and be protected. It is expressed in the "I've got your back" sense of loyalty. True friendship.

Hebrews 13:1-2: (NKJV) ¹Let brotherly **love** <5360> continue. ²Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.

We should be kind, generous and caring, and reach out to those around us. This applies especially to our marriages.

How do we treat our very good friends?

1 Peter 3:8-9: (NKJV) ⁸Finally, all of you *be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as **brothers** <5361>, be tenderhearted, be courteous;* ⁹*not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.*



What are some of the things we can look at in our treatment of our spouses to be sure we are treating them as really good friends?

- ♥ *Be sensitive to the needs of your spouse. If they are feeling down, give them hugs, kisses and words of appreciation and thankfulness for them. It could be just what is needed in the moment.*
- ♥ *Ask your spouse, "What can I do for you?"*
- ♥ *Be kind, courteous and respectful.*
- ♥ *Be a good listener.*
- ♥ *Share what is on your heart and mind.*
- ♥ *Encourage your spouse spiritually.*
- ♥ *Forgive each other.*
- ♥ *Make "date night" part of your weekly routine.*

Our spouse should be such a good friend that we should know before marriage they are not perfect. Passion is not a basis for marriage - it is a by-product of a wonderful marriage. Friendship is a basis for marriage.



Proverbs 18:24: (NASB) *A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

Friday night date night with my wife gives me great strength. She is my friend and confidant. It is not a romantic dinner out, but it is the most bonding evening of the week and helps me cope with the rest of life.



How many ways is my spouse clearly my best friend?

John 15:13-14: (NASB) ¹³Greater love (selfless love) has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you.

Friendship can promote agape love.

While this text is talking about "agape" love (coming up) and not "philadelphia" or brotherly love, it is clearly showing us a powerful and life-altering bond among friends.

There is faithfulness in friendship. What do friends do? They communicate honestly and count on each other:

Ephesians 4:25: (KJV) *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.*

We can also say, *speak every man truth with his spouse.*

Honesty and communication. Both come from a heart that is open to godly righteousness:

Luke 8:15: (KJV) *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

This word for honest means beautiful, good and virtuous. Communication is simply a learned skill that begins with the high value of your spouse, slowing yourself way down, and listening with your heart, mind and body.

Is your spouse your greatest friend?



Let us build (or rebuild) our faithful friendship with our spouse, for this simple but deep friendship is a broad foundation on which to build a successful marriage.

There may be situations where individuals got married without faithful friendship already in place. If we do not have that friendship, then start building it step-by-step. What matters is what we will do today and, in the days ahead, to make our spouse our best friend. Sometimes the building blocks of friendship may not be as exciting as the passion, but those are the building blocks we will be able to stand on for the rest of our lives.

Passion and friendship are love expressed from the vantage point of extremes. What is in the middle?

There is a lot of space in between the power of passion and the faithfulness of friendship. In a marriage this space is entirely occupied by the remaining two kinds of love. Next, we will look at the love one has for their family - similar to that of a friend, but even deeper and more powerful.



LOVE
Family love

Love: Strong's #5362 *philandros*, #5387 *philostorgos*, #5388 *philoteknos*
the affection between spouses, parents to children and children to parents.
This level is the most basic and instinctive.



Be sacrificial, What Does a Healthy Relationship Look Like, UnbreakMe

- *I want you to consider this first - imagine your relationship with somebody very close to you. It might be your mother, your father, a brother, sister, a friend, a person that you're dating, your spouse - whoever it might be. That person you regard as more important than you in the relationship. Imagine what it would feel like if they were regarding you as more important to them than they themselves. That's called sacrificial. Sacrificial means that I will give up sometimes my desires for the other person. Nothing draws the heart of the other person emotionally better than me caring more about that other person. Now you might be saying, "Well, what about me?" That's a fair question. Do you know that if you really care about that person sacrificially, you will so draw them to want to feel and do the same thing for you?*



Titus 2:3-5: (NKJV) ³...the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—⁴that they admonish the young women to **love <5362>** their husbands, to **love <5388>** their children, ⁵to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

This Scripture is admonishing the older women to teach the younger women how to live. It is not instinctive. We need to be willing to learn. The need to keep standards before us is plainly obvious. This text is not saying these things were being omitted - it is saying these things need to be central. Family love is fulfilling.

We should keep each other's confidences. Keep private issues private. We need to be a trusting friend to our family.

Romans 12:10: (NKJV) ¹⁰Be kindly **affectionate <5387>** to one another with brotherly **love <5360>**, in honor giving preference to one another;

This elevates "brotherly love" within the body of Christ to "family love" within the body of Christ. How do we elevate our spouse in this way? Do they know and feel this "family love"?



I was discussing the topic of this podcast with my mother during dinner tonight. My mom and dad have been married for almost 65 years. I asked my mom what was important for them in their marriage. She answered: Say, 'I love you' often - do not ignore each other - be sincere - always help each other - always do things together - listen to music together (when they do this, it always turns into a sing-along). Music has always played an important role in our family. We love to harmonize together.



A lack of this family love is cited twice in the Scriptures as a sign of the depth of sin and as a sign of the End Times:

Romans 1:28,31: (NASB) ²⁸And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, ³¹without understanding, untrustworthy, **unloving <794>**, unmerciful;

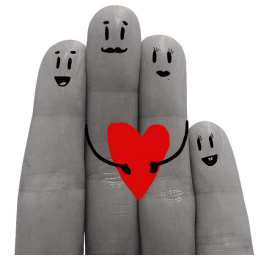
Unloving: Strong's #794 *astorgos* hard-hearted towards kindred, without natural affection

2 Timothy 3:1-3: (NASB) ¹But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ²For men will be... ³**unloving <794>**, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal...

Look around you carefully and see the many ways our generations have subtly fulfilled these prophetic statements. How often do we divorce for **irreconcilable** differences? How many parents disengage with their children and let the educational system and technology raise their children?



Am I letting my spouse slip out of this family love because I am too busy or stressed? *We need to be sure our spouse is in the middle of the family love.* Do we leave our spouse behind to focus on our children? Sometimes when there is friction due to stresses of life, the focus is on the children to avoid the friction and the spouse is not included in the family love.



Perhaps the principle of the following text fits here - we cannot serve our families (and therefore God) and serve the world as well:

Luke 16:10-13: (NASB) ¹⁰He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much (that "little thing" could be the way we treat our spouse.) ¹¹Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? ¹²And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? ¹³No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.



The fulfillment of family must be consciously kept in the front of our minds, as it is SO easy to overlook. Family and spouse are always there and therefore easily upstaged.

Family love is one of the ways we can build a healthy, loving and long-term relationship.

So far, we have seen the importance of passion, friendship and family. What more could there be?

Now we take a giant step. Selfless love is the crowning characteristic of this whole equation. To have a truly successful marriage, all of the previous things are important but, truthfully, none of them are as important as this next level of love. Master this and you will certainly be an enormously positive influence in your marriage.



A strong marriage
is built upon

putting your spouse first.

Loving them enough to not be concerned with what you get in return powerfully sets the table for true marital connection and growth.



SELFLESS LOVE *Benevolent*

Love: Strong's #26 *agape* love, i.e. affection or benevolence; specially (plural) a love-feast

The beauty of benevolence is not that it is romantic; rather, it is the giving out of our heart without any need or thought to receive back.

We KNOW men and women are wired differently. As we will see, women in general are clearly more intuitive and more readily able to understand love.



As a result, we are shown different roles:

Ephesians 5:21-24: (NASB) ²¹And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. ²²Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, he himself being the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Husbands: *Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church.*

Wives: *Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. As the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.*

Sounds like a recipe for unfair treatment, rebellion and even lawsuits! As usual, if we just read a part of the Scripture, then we cannot possibly begin to grasp its true meaning.

Equality is not having the same role but having different roles and fulfilling them equally.

 **Cherishing, *The Act of Listening*, StoryCorps, National Public Radio**

- *This interview between a betting clerk in Brooklyn named Danny Perassas who brought his wife Annie to StoryCorps to talk about his love for her.*
- *(Danny) You see the thing of it is, I always feel guilty when I say “I love you” to you and I say it so often. And I say it to remind you, that as dumpy as I am, it’s coming from here. It’s like hearing a beautiful song from a busted old radio. It’s nice of you to keep the radio around the house.*
- *(Annie) If I don’t have a note on the kitchen table I think there’s something wrong. You write a love letter to me every morning.*
- *(Danny) Well, the only thing that could possibly be wrong is that I couldn’t find a silly pen.*
- *(Annie) To my princess: the weather out today is extremely rainy. I’ll call you at 11:20 in the morning.*
- *(Danny) It’s a romantic weather report.*
- *(Annie) (Finishing reading the love note) And I love you, I love you, I love you.*



- (Danny) *When a guy is happily married, no matter what happens at work, no matter what happens in the rest of the day, there's a shelter when you get home. There's a knowledge knowing that you can hug somebody without them throwing you down the stairs and saying get your hands off me. Being married is like having a colored television set. You never want to go back to black and white.*



Danny cherished his wife. Coming home to shelter should be a priceless part of our married lives.

If you are missing this priceless part in your marriage, step back and evaluate what you are missing. Start with the four types of love - the friendship - the family - and selfless love, and then the passion will come back.

Husbands are clearly taught to love their wives as a Christian responsibility:

Ephesians 5:25-31: (NASB) ²⁵Husbands, **love <25>** your wives, just as Christ also **loved <25>** the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word (**cherish**), ²⁷that he might present to himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸So husbands ought also to **love <25>** their own wives as their own bodies. (**Caring for our bodies is instinctive. The love for our wives should also become instinctive.**) He who **loves <25>** his own wife **loves <25>** himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and **cherishes <2282>** it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰because we are members of his body. ³¹For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

Merriam Webster:

Cherish: (verb)

1a: to hold dear: feel or show affection for

1b: to keep or cultivate with care and affection: nurture

2: to entertain or harbor in the mind deeply and resolutely



**The key to truly
valuing your spouse
is in the concept of
cherishing:**

Love: Strongs #25 *agapao* to loved early

Cherish: Thayers #2282 *thalpoo* 1. properly, to warm, keep warm 2. to cherish with tender love, to foster with tender care

Agape love is love that gives without needing something in return.

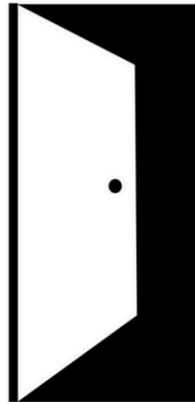


Observations from the previous guidance on valuing one another:

- Women - LOVE and be subject
- Men - LOVE and give yourself up for her



- Men - LOVE and care for her as your own body
- Men - Your love for her becomes your way of self-preservation
- Men - Cherish her
- Men - Leave all other ties for her sake
- Men and Women - LOVE and be subject



To truly love your spouse selflessly

is to love sacrificially, and that is what Jesus did.

This type of love opens doors of bonding, communication, and vulnerable trust.

Now that we have the four kinds of love in place, what should our everyday lives begin to look like?

Gathering and digesting information is a significant beginning to the journey towards a strong marriage. Walking the walk is where it becomes challenging and even discouraging, for it is in the taking of actual steps that our weaknesses are revealed. But take heart - this is good news, for now we know where we need work.

The Scriptures are pouring themselves out to say, "Here is how to make it work. Here is what you can do. Here is how you can be. Here is where you can go. Take that and run with it."



Is built upon everyday intentions, thoughts and efforts that both spouses put into themselves and each other.

Every day, if you want your marriage to be strong, there must be intentional thinking and action. It cannot be, "Oh yes, I just sort of remembered..." That means it is not driving you. When you have an intentional thought, it is a driving thought. Perhaps you are in a situation where your marriage is not what you would like it to be or what it could be.



Maybe you are in a rough spot or maybe it is just bad. We would submit to you that according to what we have read in Scripture, the intentional thinking and intentional action to "right the ship" is what might be missing at this point.

When things are not going well, one of the defaults is, "Well, if only they did this," or "If she was doing that or he could have done that." Our gut response to this is, "Look in the mirror first because that is what we can control." The intentionality with which we approach our marriage is such an important factor.



The most important secret, *Before You Get Married, Watch This, Prince Ea*

- *Marriage expert John Gottman can sit with newly engaged couples for 15 minutes or less and predict with 94 percent success the likelihood of whether that couple will be happily married or miserable and divorced. What is his secret? How does he do it? He says the key to relationship success does not lie in candlelight dinners, it is not found in trips to Paris or horse and carriage rides under moonlit skies, it is not found in getting your partner a different gift every other week, and it is not found during long walks on the beach. Gottman says the most important factor for a happy marriage is - attention. Small moments of positive attention.*

Pretty simple, isn't it? Small moments of positive attention. Attention does not mean that you are glancing up from reading your last text: "I will pay attention to my wife and then I will respond to this text." That is not attention. That is playing a game. Attention is having the phone put away, having everything else put aside, and having them be the centerpiece of your life for those moments.

We have to focus so there is nothing else but them. Those are small moments of attention. A quiz to see if you are listening is to repeat back what they said. What was their attitude when they said it? If you cannot do that, then you were not paying attention. Sometimes we pay attention and we still cannot do that, but that is part of learning.

Let's review the four types of love and then we will learn about an incredible example of marriage in Scripture.



The Power of Passion: The give and take of emotions that are driven by our physical senses as well as our deep-seated desires. Passion will not last unless it adjusts with age and experience and is fed with the other three types of love. ***For marriage to be vibrant, our spouse MUST be the object of our passion.***

Can you be passionate about other things? Absolutely! But when it comes down to that deep-seated desire within you, it is your spouse. That is hard to get to. A lot of times people have that at the beginning because you have this connection - and there is something to be said for people connecting. But that connection is not going to carry you through life. That connection needs to be fed and nurtured and it needs to learn how to grow up as YOU grow up and change. We should reignite it if it was lost. Sometimes reigniting does not



mean you will get the same flame that was there; it could be different, and that is okay, depending on what stage of life you are in. But we should not kid ourselves - while passion is important, it is not the centerpiece. We started with passion because that is the most popular part of the whole conversation. But it does not work without the rest.

The Faithfulness of Friendship: The sharing and caring that goes to and from those who walk with us in our purpose. This is the “I’ve got your back” territory. It is here that there is potential for genuine fun, great accomplishment, and extraordinary mutual support. ***For marriage to thrive, our spouse **MUST** be such a friend.***

Sometimes, you might be in a situation where you are married, and you were not that kind of friend. *Become* that kind of friend. How do you do that? Pay close personal attention. Be that friend and that friendship will produce faithfulness.

The Fulfillment of Family: It is here that we ought to become most loyal and therefore most vulnerable as well. Your family should be the source of your closest protection and the subject of your deepest earthly affection and attention. ***For marriage to become unbreakable, your spouse **MUST** be the centerpiece of this devotion.***

It is too easy to focus on family-love and children (if you have them) and then the spouse becomes part of the background. Do not do this. Let your spouse be in the foreground because they are the one who was there in the beginning, and they are the one who is going to be there in the end.

The Beauty of Benevolence: It is this love that makes it possible for all of the other forms of love to grow, for this love always gives without a need to receive. This love is directly modeled after Jesus. ***For our earthly marriages to be truly complete, we **MUST** treat our spouses with benevolence before any other person.***

You cannot be angry with your spouse and cherish them at the same time. You must choose.



A truly healthy and blessed marriage is able to use the combined talents and characters of both spouses to reach out and bless others.



Here is the beauty of this whole thing: if you have a strong enough marriage, it now can be fruitful not only *within* itself but *outside* of itself. It can be effective to the upbuilding of the people around you, and that is where marriage can soar to new heights that we never would have dreamed possible.

An example of a great marriage that shows us all what it looks like to reach out to others:

Acts 18:1-3: (NASB) *In Corinth Paul ²...found a Jew named Aquila... having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, ³and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them... for by trade they were tent-makers.*

Aquila and Priscilla were ushered out of Rome; they had gone through difficulties. They were Jews and Paul witnessed the gospel to them. They became Christians and they worked together as tentmakers.

Aquila and Priscilla housed the Apostle Paul and co-labored with him. They worked with Paul in spreading the gospel but also in making a living.

They all went to Ephesus together:

Acts 18:24-26: (NASB) *²⁴Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian... an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John. ²⁶...But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.*

Apollos in Scripture is recognized as a powerful, eloquent, convincing and intelligent speaker. Yet, at the beginning, he did not have the whole story. What did Aquila and Priscilla do? They did not say to him, "You are making a mistake! You are saying everything wrong!" No, instead they pulled him aside and instructed him based on what they learned. With quietness and humility, they helped him put the pieces together he did not know about. They taught the great teacher. He became a great teacher of the gospel. Notice that it is not just Aquila who does it; it is also Priscilla. They did it together. This shows us the power of that couple.

Romans 16:3-5: (NASB) *³Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who for my life risked their own necks... ⁵also greet the church that is in their house...*

There are two big things in this verse. First, he says to greet them. He says they risked their lives for him. As a couple, they risked their lives for the Apostle Paul. The other point is there is a church that meets in their house, and we know that individuals make up the church - it is not a building or an organization. It is the sons of God following in Jesus' footsteps. They were the ones who were taking the responsibility of giving other Christians a place to go so they could study, pray, worship and praise together. What an example! Everything they have done in the Scriptures up to this point has been exemplary. They move from one place to another, they house the Apostle Paul, they work with him physically and spiritually, they witness to Apollos, they risk their lives for Paul and now they are housing fellow Christians to help them be fed.



That has got to be a marriage that was as solid as solid could be. They were on the same page, they had love in every aspect, and they were able to spread it to others.

1 Corinthians 16:19: (NASB) *The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*

There is a commonality in all of these Scriptures: Aquila and Priscilla are always mentioned in Scripture together. Never are they mentioned without the other. Their dedication to Christ is firm, clear, focused, active and intentional. It also shows you they did everything together. They did not just tolerate each other. They loved and supported one another. They were friends with one another, they were family to one another, and they were selfless to one another. Because they could put all of those things in place, they could become the powerhouses that were such an incredible witness by just being who they were.

There are not a lot of examples of couples in Scripture. Aquila and Priscilla are planted in Scripture very specifically to show us what a true couple in Christ actually should look like in terms of service. What a great example!

We do a podcast every year about marriage (add comma) because we think it is so important for us to understand (delete that) this is a sacred covenant we make before God. It is one to another and meant to last for life. It is a commitment that requires many things: passion, faithful friendship, fulfillment of family and the beauty of benevolence are all parts of what make a marriage work. Every part takes effort, work, sacrifice, intention and focus. But you can make your marriage better every day by simply focusing on these and focusing on your spouse.

*So, what does a marriage need to be strong?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



**Join us next week for our podcast on February 18, 2019:
Ep. #1061: "How Many Baptisms are There?"**

Bonus Material!

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person. — Mignon McLaughlin



This verse has all three types of love included:

Romans 12:9-13: (NASB) ⁹Let **love <26>** be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be **devoted <5387>** to one another in brotherly **love <5360>**; give preference to one another in honor; ¹¹not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, ¹³contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Ephesians 4:29: (NASB) Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Love - selfless love - is what provokes the ability to live and speak according to this text:

- No unwholesome (rotten, putrefied) words but words of edification (architecture, confirmation)
- Speak words that are valuable - according to the need of the moment
- The end result of our words should be grace to the hearer

(Source: Four types of Love in the Bible, Thoughtco.com)

Agape Love: Pronunciation: [Uh - GAH - Pay]

Perhaps the best way to understand agape love is to think of it as the type of love that comes from God. Agape is divine love, which makes it perfect, pure, and self-sacrificing. When the Bible says that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), it's referring to agape love.

Storge Love: Pronunciation: [STORE - jay]

The love described by the Greek word storge is best understood as family love. It's the kind of easy bond that naturally forms between parents and their children -- and sometimes between siblings in the same household. This kind of love is steady and sure. It's love that arrives easily and endures for a lifetime.



Phileo Love: Pronunciation: [Fill - EH - oh]

Phileo describes an emotional connection that goes beyond acquaintances or casual friendships. When we experience phileo, we experience a deeper level of connection. This connection is not as deep as the love within a family, perhaps, nor does it carry the intensity of romantic passion or erotic love. Yet phileo is a powerful bond that forms a community and offers multiple benefits to those who share it.

Eros Love: Pronunciation: [AIR - ohs]

Eros is the Greek term that describes romantic or sexual love. The term also portrays the idea of passion and intensity of feeling. The word was originally connected with the goddess Eros of Greek Mythology.

Understanding the Difference Between Passionate and Companionate Love (Source: <http://talkitover.in/love/understanding-what-love-is-and-how-it-grows-in-a-marriage>)

We often get together with our partners when we ‘feel love’ or ‘fall in love.’ The experience of ‘falling in love’ involves an intense and unrealistic emotional reaction to another person, also referred to as *passionate love*. At such times, we may see our loved one inaccurately, i.e. we may see them as “perfect” in every way, emphasizing their virtues and dismissing their faults as unimportant. However, passionate love is too intense and unrealistic to be maintained as a permanent emotional state.

There are other kinds of love that can be long lasting. *Companionate love* is described as love that is based on friendship, mutual attraction, shared interests, respect and concern for one another’s welfare. It may not seem as exciting as passionate love, but it is a crucial aspect of a satisfying and lasting relationship.

Since many of us mistakenly equate only romantic feelings or passionate love with love; in long-term relationships like marriage we may begin to wonder what happened to our heady *feelings* of love. Living together involves doing numerous house-hold chores, paying bills, finishing to do lists, going to work. None of these are particularly known to inspire feelings of romance or passionate love between people! Yet it is these very activities done together that forge strong bonds of deep caring and attachment, also known as companionate or mature love. Companionate love is based on a better understanding of ourselves and our partner.

All of the biblical references to Aquila and Priscilla in their context:

Acts 18:1-28: (NASB) ¹After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. ²And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, ³and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers. ⁴And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. ⁵But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles. ⁷Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to



the synagogue. ⁸Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. ⁹And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; ¹⁰for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city. ¹¹And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. ¹²But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat, ¹³saying, This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law. ¹⁴But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you; ¹⁵but if there are questions about words and names and your own law, look after it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters. ¹⁶And he drove them away from the judgment seat. ¹⁷And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio was not concerned about any of these things. ¹⁸Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. ¹⁹They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent, ²¹but taking leave of them and saying, I will return to you again if God wills, he set sail from Ephesus. ²²When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch. ²³And having spent some time there, he left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. ²⁴Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; ²⁶and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, ²⁸for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Romans 16:3-5: (NASB) ³Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; ⁵also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

1 Corinthians 16:19: (NASB) The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

2 Timothy 4:19: (NASB) Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.